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PTO/SB/05 (4/98)

**UTILITY  
PATENT APPLICATION  
TRANSMITTAL**

(Only for new nonprovisional applications under 37 C.F.R. § 1.53(b))

Attorney Docket No. \_\_\_\_\_

First Inventor or Application Identifier Curtis J. CampbellTitle APPARATUS FOR SEASONING FOOD

Express Mail Label No. \_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICATION ELEMENTS**  
See MPEP chapter 600 concerning utility patent application contents.

1. ☒ \* Fee Transmittal Form (e.g., PTO/SB/17)  
(Submit an original and a duplicate for fee processing)
2. ☒ Specification [Total Pages 10]  
(preferred arrangement set forth below)  
- Descriptive title of the Invention  
- Cross References to Related Applications  
- Statement Regarding Fed sponsored R & D  
- Reference to Microfiche Appendix  
- Background of the Invention  
- Brief Summary of the Invention  
- Brief Description of the Drawings (if filed)  
- Detailed Description  
- Claim(s)  
- Abstract of the Disclosure
3. ☒ Drawing(s) (35 U.S.C. 113) [Total Sheets 1]
4. Oath or Declaration [Total Pages 2]  
a. ☒ Newly executed (original or copy)  
b. ☐ Copy from a prior application (37 C.F.R. § 1.63(d))  
(for continuation/divisional with Box 16 completed)  
i. ☐ **DELETION OF INVENTOR(S)**  
Signed statement attached deleting  
inventor(s) named in the prior application,  
see 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.63(d)(2) and 1.33(b).

\* NOTE FOR ITEMS 1 & 13: IN ORDER TO BE ENTITLED TO PAY SMALL ENTITY  
FEES, A SMALL ENTITY STATEMENT IS REQUIRED (37 C.F.R. § 1.27), EXCEPT  
IF ONE FILED IN A PRIOR APPLICATION IS RELIED UPON (37 C.F.R. § 1.28).

**ADDRESS TO:** Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
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Washington, DC 20231

5. ☐ Microfiche Computer Program (Appendix)
6. Nucleotide and/or Amino Acid Sequence Submission  
(if applicable, all necessary)  
a. ☐ Computer Readable Copy  
b. ☐ Paper Copy (identical to computer copy)  
c. ☐ Statement verifying identity of above copies

**ACCOMPANYING APPLICATION PARTS**

7. ☐ Assignment Papers (cover sheet & document(s))
8. ☐ 37 C.F.R. § 3.73(b) Statement of Power of Attorney  
(when there is an assignee)
9. ☐ English Translation Document (if applicable)
10. ☐ Information Disclosure Statement (IDS)/PTO-1449 [Copies of IDS Citations]
11. ☐ Preliminary Amendment
12. ☒ Return Receipt Postcard (MPEP 503)  
(Should be specifically itemized)
13. ☒ \* Small Entity Statement(s) filed in prior application, Status still proper and desired  
(PTO/SB/09-12)
14. ☐ Certified Copy of Priority Document(s)  
(if foreign priority is claimed)
15. ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**16. If a CONTINUING APPLICATION, check appropriate box, and supply the requisite information below and in a preliminary amendment:**

☐ Continuation ☐ Divisional ☐ Continuation-in-part (CIP) of prior application No: \_\_\_\_\_

Prior application information: Examiner \_\_\_\_\_ Group / Art Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

**For CONTINUATION or DIVISIONAL APPS only:** The entire disclosure of the prior application, from which an oath or declaration is supplied under Box 4b, is considered a part of the disclosure of the accompanying continuation or divisional application and is hereby incorporated by reference. The incorporation can only be relied upon when a portion has been inadvertently omitted from the submitted application parts.

**17. CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS**☐ Customer Number or Bar Code Label

(Insert Customer No. or Attach bar code label here)

or ☒ Correspondence address below

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Signature	<i>John E. Schone</i>	Date	Jan 18, 2000

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PTO  
09/44469

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**STATEMENT CLAIMING SMALL ENTITY STATUS  
(37 CFR 1.9(f) & 1.27(b))--INDEPENDENT INVENTOR**

Docket Number (Optional)

Applicant, Patentee, or Identifier: Curtis J. Campbell

Application or Patent No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Filed or Issued: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: Apparatus for Seasoning Food

As a below named inventor, I hereby state that I qualify as an independent inventor as defined in 37 CFR 1.9(c) for purposes of paying reduced fees to the Patent and Trademark Office described in:

- ☒ the specification filed herewith with title as listed above.  
☐ the application identified above.  
☐ the patent identified above.

I have not assigned, granted, conveyed, or licensed, and am under no obligation under contract or law to assign, grant, convey, or license, any rights in the invention to any person who would not qualify as an independent inventor under 37 CFR 1.9(c) if that person had made the invention, or to any concern which would not qualify as a small business concern under 37 CFR 1.9(d) or a nonprofit organization under 37 CFR 1.9(e).

Each person, concern, or organization to which I have assigned, granted, conveyed, or licensed or am under an obligation under contract or law to assign, grant, convey, or license any rights in the invention is listed below:

- ☒ No such person, concern, or organization exists.  
☐ Each such person, concern, or organization is listed below.

Separate statements are required from each named person, concern, or organization having rights to the invention stating their status as small entities. (37 CFR 1.27)

I acknowledge the duty to file, in this application or patent, notification of any change in status resulting in loss of entitlement to small entity status prior to paying, or at the time of paying, the earliest of the issue fee or any maintenance fee due after the date on which status as a small entity is no longer appropriate. (37 CFR 1.28(b))

Curtis J. Campbell

NAME OF INVENTOR

NAME OF INVENTOR

NAME OF INVENTOR

*Curtis J. Campbell*

Signature of inventor

Signature of inventor

Signature of inventor

19 JAN 00

Date

Date

Date

# **APPARATUS FOR SEASONING FOOD**

## **BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

The present invention relates generally to the field of food preparation and more particularly to the seasoning of meats and other solid foods. The present invention is particularly useful for seasoning meats, including but not limited to, beef, poultry and fish.

The use of seasonings, herbs and other food additives, in conjunction with the preparation and cooking of solid foods is of ancient origin. Such seasonings and additives are typically sprinkled on the outer surfaces of the solid food to be prepared prior to cooking or during the actual cooking of the food. The intention is to improve the flavor of the food or to make it more palatable. It has been found that the best use of the seasonings and additives can be achieved if such ingredients can be injected inside of the food and not merely limited to distribution on the outer surfaces of the food. Common methods of injecting the seasonings within the food include the use of a knife or fork to penetrate the food with the intention and expectation that the seasonings will be drawn into the food thus becoming more widely distributed throughout the food.

Such simplistic methods as penetrating the food with a knife or fork has proven to be inadequate for seasoning purposes, and as a result many other methods for distributing seasonings and additives have been proposed. Many of the proposed devices however, are elaborate or cumbersome, and not well suited for household use by an individual housewife preparing a meal.

US Patent 3916777 for example teaches a meat tenderizing system however it is altogether too elaborate for average household use. The system dispenses an enzyme into the meat through an injection needle attached to a hose. US Patent 4178660 also teaches an apparatus for distributing additives in meat, but this device is also too complicated for the average housewife.

It injects additives into the body of the meat, which additives are housed in a cylinder, and are forced into the meat when it has been pierced. Patent 4414885 is also of a similar nature. This system injects food additives inside the meat by forcing the additives out of a cylinder by means of a plunger that is attached to the device.

Other devices have been proposed for tenderizing meat that rely upon blades and knives to cut the sinew and tendon included in the meat and thereby increase the tenderness of the meat by such means. US Patent 4908909 for example teaches a meat hammer which is operated by a piston. US Patent 5593346 contemplates a meat tenderizing mallet that injects tenderizing fluids into the meat through apertures on the mallet head. US Patent 4242774 is also a meat tenderizer that has as its intent and purpose, the cutting of fiber in the meat utilizing the sharp teeth found on the meat tenderizing device. Finally US Patent 5922377 teaches an apparatus for flavoring food that utilizes a rod to penetrate the meat and deposit the food flavorings that are attached to the rod. The flavorings have been loosely held to the rod through the use of a binder agent. To distribute flavorings throughout the entire body of meat the rod must be inserted a number of times or, alternatively, several rods must be utilized.

Although each of these devices and others like them address the subject of food preparation and more particularly the preparation of meat, poultry and fish there still remains a need to provide a quick, easy and efficient method of distributing food seasonings throughout the solid food that can be utilized by the typical housewife in the household.

## OBJECTS OF THE INVENTION

Accordingly it is a principle object of the invention to provide an apparatus for distributing seasonings, flavorings and sauces in solid foods, and in particular in meat, poultry and fish.

Another object is to distribute surface applied seasonings and sauces uniformly beneath the outer surface of the food. It is yet again another object to create surface penetrations of solid food products to allow for easier penetration by subsequently applied applications of sauces and seasonings. Another object is to minimize the loss of surface\_applied seasonings during the cooking process. Yet another object is to minimize the attachment of food particles to the seasoning apparatus when the apparatus is removed from the food.

A still further object is to create a meat seasoning device that is easily used by the average person and average housewife. The present invention can be easily held in the hand of an average person and stored in the typical kitchen cabinet drawer. The present invention is also easily cleanable in an automatic dishwasher and is safe for use in such dishwashers.

These and other advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the subsequent detailed description of the preferred embodiment and the appended claims when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings which are described below.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

**Fig. 1** is a perspective view of a first embodiment of the apparatus for seasoning food.

**FIG. 2** is a side view of the first embodiment of the apparatus for seasoning food.

**FIG. 3** is an end view of the first embodiment showing in more detail the head of the apparatus for seasoning food, and the prongs mounted on the head.

**FIG. 4** is a partial side view of **FIG. 2** taken along the line A-A.

**FIG. 5** is a partial side view of **FIG. 2** taken along line A-A but representing a second embodiment of the present invention.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION AND PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

**FIG. 1** is a perspective view of the apparatus for seasoning food **10** encompassing one embodiment of the present invention. The apparatus for seasoning food **10** generally comprises handle **12**, a head **14** and prongs **16** mounted on head **14**. The apparatus for seasoning food **10** is of a size that is convenient for use by the average housewife. The apparatus for seasoning food is of a weight such that prongs **16** can be easily driven into the food by grasping handle **12** and tapping downwardly as much as necessary such that prongs **16** are driven into the food. Typically the food to be seasoned would be sprinkled with seasoning or flavoring on the outer surface and then by tapping the apparatus for seasoning food, the prongs **16** are driven into the food carrying the seasonings with them. The apparatus for seasoning food **10** can also be used to tap the food before adding the seasoning, thus making perforations in the food to allow seasonings or flavorings to easily penetrate the food. This works particularly well when the seasoning or flavorings to be added are in a liquid form such as during a marination process.

Handle **12** as can be seen in **FIG. 1** is, in the preferred embodiment, of a size that can be conveniently held in the hand. No particular size is required according to the present invention, however, in a preferred embodiment of the present invention, handle **12** is elongated and is round and of a diameter such that the fingers of an average person can easily grasp said handle **12**. According to the present invention handle **12** could be made from any convenient rigid, resilient material including wood, metal or plastic. In a preferred embodiment handle **12** would be manufactured from a polycarbonate plastic. In a preferred embodiment head **14** and prongs **16** would also be manufactured of the same polycarbonate material, but may be manufactured from any rigid, resilient material including wood, metal or plastic.

**FIG. 2** is a side view of the apparatus for seasoning food **10** and depicts head **14** in more detail as it is mounted and attached to handle **12**. No specific head **14** size or shape is required according to the present invention, however, in a preferred embodiment head **14** would be of a size large enough to easily and reasonably accommodate fourteen (14) prongs **16**. Head **14** is mounted and attached to handle **12** by any traditional attachment methods and means including, bolts, screws, nails, threads, adhesives or by interlocking design. In a preferred embodiment head **14** is manufactured from polycarbonate and formed together with handle **12** and prongs **16**. Head **14**, however, can according to the present invention be manufactured of any convenient rigid material. These would include wood, metal, or plastic. **FIG. 2** also shows a side view of prongs **16** as they are typically affixed to head **14**. Prongs **16** will be described in more detail below.

Turning now to **FIG. 3** we see an end view of the apparatus for seasoning food **10** particularly describing head **14** and prongs **16**. Prong tip **20** is also visible in **FIG. 3**. According to the present invention a plurality of prongs **16** are mounted to head **14**. Prongs **16** can be attached and mounted to head **14** by any convenient and standard mounting methods including adhesives and interlocking designs. Prongs **16** can be manufactured from any rigid, resilient materials, including metals and plastics, and in a preferred embodiment is formed from a polycarbonate material together with head **14** and handle **12**. In a preferred embodiment prongs **16** are mounted in a uniform and equally distributed manner over head **14**. According to the present invention however, no particular number or distribution of prongs **16** are required.

**FIG. 4** is a partial side view of the apparatus for seasoning food **10** taken through section line A-A of **FIG. 2**. **FIG. 4** shows the detail of prongs **16** as described above. It is not intended that prongs **16** should be driven all the way through the food, nor is it the specific purpose of the present invention to tenderize a meat product by cutting through fiber or other hard material.

Prongs 16 need only be long enough to carry the seasonings below the surface of the food and for this purpose it has been determined that a length of one eighth to one half of an inch for prongs 16 is the optimum length. As stated previously, prongs 16 can be fabricated from any rigid material that does not flex or bend when tapped into the food. In the preferred embodiment prongs 16 would be manufactured from a polycarbonate plastic and formed as part of the overall manufacture of apparatus for seasoning food 10. It has been determined, as part of the preferred embodiment of prongs 16, that the outer surfaces of prongs 16 should be slightly roughened in order to better carry the seasonings and flavorings into the body of the food. Additionally, prongs 16 should have a slightly tapered shape for best results as shown in FIG. 4, however, such a taper is not a requirement of the present invention.

Prong tip 20 is also identified in FIG. 4 and is located at the distal end of prongs 16. Prong tip 20 should be sharp enough to make penetration of the food relatively easy however, prong tip 20 should not be so sharp as to cause possible injury to the user of apparatus for seasoning food 10. In a preferred embodiment prong tip 20 would be very slightly rounded, but not so rounded as to cause seasonings or flavorings to adhere thereto.

Turning now to FIG. 5 there is also presented a partial side view of the apparatus for seasoning food 10 taken through line A-A of FIG. 2 and presenting a second embodiment of prongs 16. Prongs 16 in this second embodiment is comprised of prong tip 20 and prong ridges 18. The size, shape, materials and mounting methods for prong 16 in this second embodiment is the same as those described above in the first embodiment, except to the extent that they are modified by prong ridges 18. In this second embodiment, each of the prongs 16 has at least one prong ridge 18. In a preferred embodiment there would be two such prong ridges 18 on each of the prongs 16. The prong ridges 18 divide prongs 16 into at least two separate sections with an abrupt change in the diameter of prongs 16 at the point of the prong ridges 18. The prong ridges 18 facilitate the carrying of additional seasonings and flavorings into the food. Prong ridges 18



should not be so large as to make the penetration of the food more difficult. In a preferred embodiment the prong ridges **18** would be approximately one thirty-second of an inch, such that the change in diameter of prongs **16** at the point of a prong ridges **18** would total approximately one sixteenth of an inch.

It is to be understood that the present invention is by no means limited to the particular constructions herein disclosed, and shown in the drawings, but also comprises any modifications or equivalents within the scope of the claims.

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus for depositing into the interior of meat a seasoning that has been deposited on the outer surfaces of the meat, the apparatus comprising:
  - a rigid handle;
  - a rigid head attached to the handle;
  - a plurality of rigid, roughened prongs engaging the head for depositing the seasoning into the meat when forced downwardly into the meat;
  - a sharpened prong tip at the distal end of each of such prongs.
2. An apparatus according to claim 1 wherein said rigid handle is manufactured from a metal.
3. An apparatus according to claim 1 wherein said rigid handle is manufactured from polycarbonate.
4. An apparatus according to claim 1 wherein said rigid handle fits conveniently in the hand.
5. An apparatus according to claim 1 wherein said rigid head is manufactured from a metal.
6. An apparatus according to claim 1 wherein said rigid head is manufactured from polycarbonate.
7. An apparatus according to claim 1 wherein said prongs are manufactured from a metal.
8. An apparatus according to claim 1 wherein said prongs are manufactured from polycarbonate.
9. An apparatus according to claim 1 wherein said prongs are approximately one eighth to one half of an inch in length.
10. An apparatus according to claim 1 wherein said prongs are slightly tapered.
11. An apparatus according to claim 1 wherein said prong tips are slightly rounded.
12. An apparatus for depositing into the interior of meat a seasoning that has been deposited on the outer surfaces of the meat, the apparatus comprising:
  - a rigid handle;
  - a rigid head attached to the handle;
  - a plurality of rigid, roughened prongs engaging the head for depositing the seasoning into

the meat when forced downwardly into the meat;

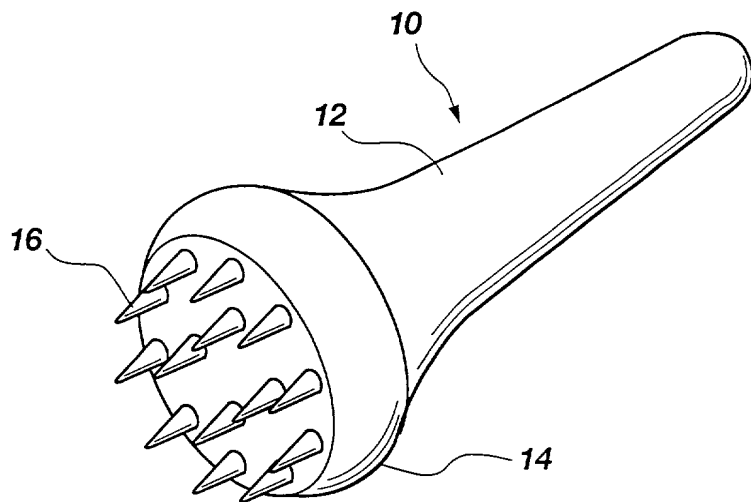
at least one prong ridge on each of such prongs marking an abrupt change in the size of said prongs;

a sharpened prong tip at the distal end of each of such prongs.

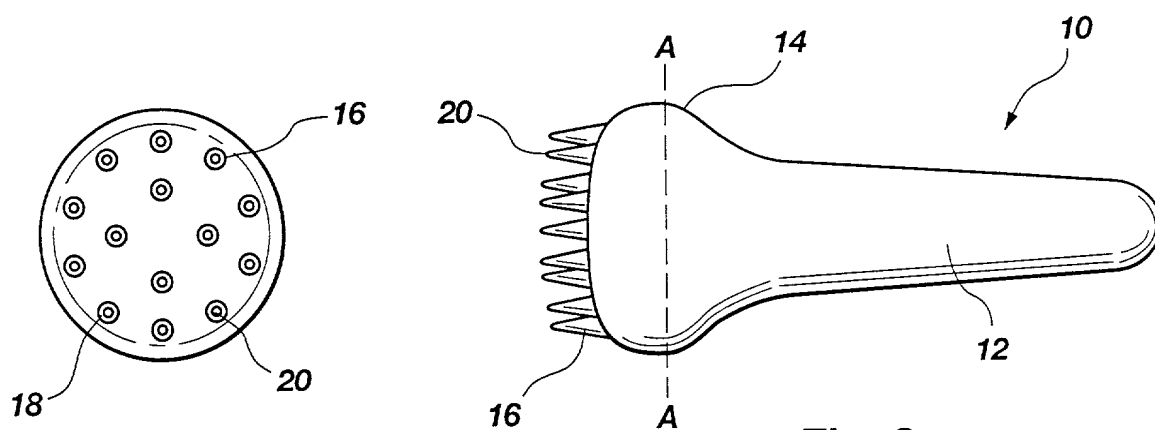
13. An apparatus according to claim 12 wherein said rigid handle is manufactured from a metal.
14. An apparatus according to claim 12 wherein said rigid handle is manufactured from polycarbonate.
15. An apparatus according to claim 12 wherein said rigid handle fits conveniently in the hand.
16. An apparatus according to claim 12 wherein said rigid head is manufactured from a metal.
17. An apparatus according to claim 12 wherein said rigid head is manufactured from polycarbonate.
18. An apparatus according to claim 12 wherein said prongs are manufactured from a metal.
19. An apparatus according to claim 12 wherein said prongs are manufactured from polycarbonate.
20. An apparatus according to claim 12 wherein said prongs are approximately one eighth to one half of an inch in length.
21. An apparatus according to claim 12 wherein said prongs are slightly tapered.
22. An apparatus according to claim 12 wherein said prong tips are slightly rounded.
23. An apparatus according to claim 12 wherein said prong ridge is approximately one thirty second of an inch in size.

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

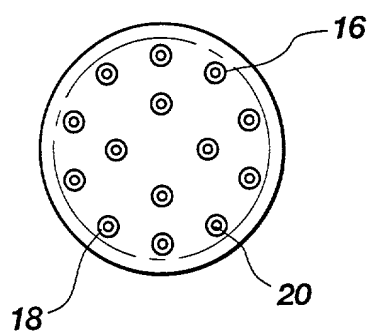
An apparatus for transporting seasoning within a food product and particularly within a meat, fish or poultry product is disclosed. The apparatus comprises a handle, a head and a plurality of prongs. Seasoning adheres to the prongs and is transported inside of the food product when the prongs are inserted into the food. In a second embodiment of the apparatus, the prongs are tiered to increase the adhesion of the seasoning to the prongs and thereby transport additional quantities of seasoning into the interior of the food product.



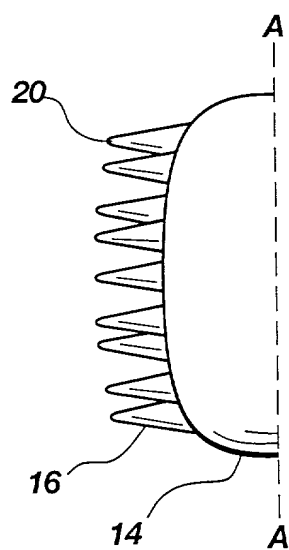
**Fig. 1**



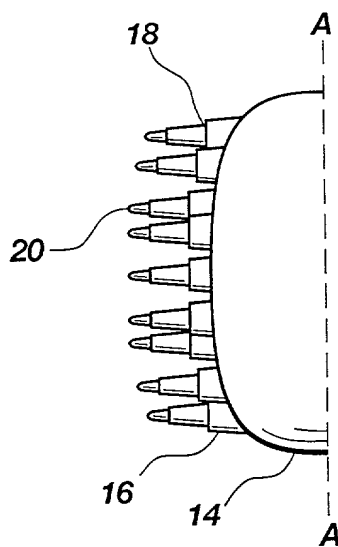
**Fig. 2**



**Fig. 3**



**Fig. 4**



**Fig. 5**

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<b>DECLARATION FOR UTILITY OR DESIGN PATENT APPLICATION (37 CFR 1.63)</b>	<b>Attorney Docket Number</b>	
	<b>First Named Inventor</b>	Curtis J. Campbell
	<b>COMPLETE IF KNOWN</b>	
	<b>Application Number</b>	/
	<b>Filing Date</b>	
	<b>Group Art Unit</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Declaration Submitted with Initial Filing	OR	<input type="checkbox"/> Declaration Submitted after Initial Filing (surcharge (37 CFR 1.16 (e)) required)
	<b>Examiner Name</b>	

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address, and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled:

APPARATUS FOR SEASONING FOOD

the specification of which (Title of the Invention)

☒ is attached hereto  
OR  
☐ was filed on (MM/DD/YYYY) as United States Application Number or PCT International

Application Number and was amended on (MM/DD/YYYY) (if applicable).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment specifically referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR 1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d) or 365(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or 365(a) of any PCT international application which designated at least one country other than the United States of America, listed below and have also identified below, by checking the box, any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate, or of any PCT international application having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed.

Prior Foreign Application Number(s)	Country	Foreign Filing Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	Priority Not Claimed	Certified Copy Attached?	
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☐ Additional foreign application numbers are listed on a supplemental priority data sheet PTO/SB/02B attached hereto:

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. 119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below.

Application Number(s)	Filing Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	<input type="checkbox"/> Additional provisional application numbers are listed on a supplemental priority data sheet PTO/SB/02B attached hereto.
N/A		

[Page 1 of 2]

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## DECLARATION — Utility or Design Patent Application

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. 120 of any United States application(s), or 365(c) of any PCT international application designating the United States of America, listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States or PCT international application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR 1.56 which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application.

U.S. Parent Application or PCT Parent Number	Parent Filing Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	Parent Patent Number (if applicable)
N/A		

☐ Additional U.S. or PCT international application numbers are listed on a supplemental priority data sheet PTO/SB/02B attached hereto.

As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following registered practitioner(s) to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith:

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☒ Registered practitioner(s) name/registration number listed below

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Name	Registration Number	Name	Registration Number
John E. Schone	36923		

☐ Additional registered practitioner(s) named on supplemental Registered Practitioner Information sheet PTO/SB/02C attached hereto

Direct all correspondence to: ☐ Customer Number  OR ☒ Correspondence address below

Name	John E. Schone				
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Address					
City	Layton	State	Utah	ZIP	84041
Country	USA	Telephone	1-801-543-4333	Fax	

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that wilful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under 18 U.S.C. 1001 and that such wilful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Name of Sole or First Inventor:		<input type="checkbox"/> A petition has been filed for this unsigned inventor			
Given Name (first and middle [if any])		Family Name or Surname			
Curtis Jay		Campbell			
Inventor's Signature	<i>Curtis J. Campbell</i>			Date	19 JAN 00
Residence: City	No. Ogden	State	Utah	Country	USA
				Citizenship	US
Post Office Address	3087 No. 1225 E.				
Post Office Address					
City	No. Ogden	State	Utah	ZIP	84414
				Country	USA

☐ Additional inventors are being named on the \_\_\_\_\_ supplemental Additional Inventor(s) sheet(s) PTO/SB/02A attached hereto